Upliftment of SCs, STs and OBCs

1930. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes and programmes formulated by Government for the upliftment of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, backward classes, minorities, widows, old-aged and other weaker sections of the society in different States of the country during the last five years;

(b) The details of amount allocated and spent on these schemes; and

(c) the present status of implementation of the said schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Financial Assistance to NGOs in NER

1931. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are providing financial assistance under various schemes to NGOs functioning at present in different States of the country, particularly in the NER during the last three years and till date;

(b) if so, the full details thereof, NGO-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) List enclosed at Annexure (*See Appendix* 189, Annexure *No.* 54)

(c) The Grant-in-aid is released to the organizations whose applications are found to be in accordance and in compliance with norms of the schemes. Efforts are being taken to encourage and assist suitable voluntary organizations in the NER.

Development of Steel Production Network

†1932. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) what target has been fixed for the development of steel production network in the country during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether the achievement is far below the target;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what effective steps have been taken by Government to enhance the rate of achievement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) to (c) As per the projection made by the Working Group on Iron and Steel for the Ninth Five Year Plan set up by Planning Commission, the production of finished steel will reach 38.01 million tonnes by 2001-02, the terminal year of Ninth Five Year Plan. This target was projected to be achieved through modernisation & expansion of existing steel plants & setting up greenfield plants in the private sector. However, due to sluggish growth in demand for steel, production capacity may be below the target.

(d) To help the industry achieve the above targets, Government has taken several steps to boost the demand for steel which inter-alia include:

* Orienting product-mix to suit the market requirements and adjusting production in tune with change in the market demand.

* Developing and nourishing long term customers relationship by entering into MoUs/supply arrangement with the customers.

* A "Steel Exporters Forum' has been set up to help steel exporters to overcome bottlenecks in exports.

* To boost the demand and consumption of steel, the Development Commissioner for Iron and Steel (DCI&S) has launched a National campaign for increasing the demand for steel, especially in non-traditional sectors such as rural and agro-based industrial sector.

* Rationalisation of Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates for steel exports have been carried out to boost exports.

* An Empowered Committee has been set up to examine & assist specific research & Development Projects to improve technology for Steel making & enhance quality of Indian Steel.